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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-fifth session on the evaluation of linkages between Headquarters and field activities: a review of best practices for poverty eradication in the framework of the United Nations Millennium Declaration

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit for the consideration of the Committee for Programme and Coordination his comments on the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-fifth session on the evaluation of linkages between Headquarters and field activities: a review of best practices for poverty eradication in the framework of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (E/AC.51/2008/4).

* E/AC.51/2008/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination at its forty-fifth session on the evaluation of linkages between Headquarters and field activities: a review of best practices for poverty eradication in the framework of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (E/AC.51/2008/4) is a thorough study of the implementation of the recommendations, and the comprehensive approach taken is noted with appreciation. However, the following additional information should be taken into account with respect to recommendations 1 and 7.

II. Specific comments

2. Recommendation 1 is aimed at enhancing collaboration among inter-agency coordinating bodies, particularly with regard to common policy issues that are of relevance to poverty eradication, with a view to bringing the United Nations system closer together analytically and operationally. OIOS noted that, with the integration of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) into the framework of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), some progress had been made in that direction. Nevertheless, it considered that further progress was required in view of the fact that the Secretary-General had not established a working group to consider the respective roles of CEB, UNDG and the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, as had been recommended by the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

3. In this connection, it should be noted that in 2007 the executive heads of the United Nations system, under the leadership of the executive heads of the World Trade Organization and the International Labour Organization, thoroughly reviewed the relationship of CEB with all inter-agency coordination bodies (including the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs) on all issues, in particular the implementation of all internationally agreed development goals and those related to the eradication of poverty and hunger. CEB decided that UNDG should be integrated into its framework in order to enhance its normative and operational links within the system. It considered that the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs was primarily intra-Secretariat in nature and should continue to operate as envisaged in the 1997 reform programme, under the leadership of the Secretary-General. That, however, would not in any way weaken the coherence among the mechanisms, as issues of relevance to the agenda of CEB may emerge from the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs as well as from the Secretary-General's Policy Committee.

4. In recommendation 7, OIOS encouraged Secretariat programmes to continue to seek ways of incorporating elements of coordination and collaboration into individual staff performance appraisal systems at the Headquarters level. In this regard, it should be noted that the Human Resources Network of the CEB High-Level Committee on Management has included performance management in its work programme and will be addressing this issue at its meeting in July 2008.

5. In the light of these observations, the conclusions reached by OIOS should also be seen in the light of the progress that has been achieved in the implementation of the recommendations.